

LETTER TO ROBERT ROSS

4..;

There is also another thing I must write to you about.

I adore this place. The whole country is lovely, full of forest and deep meadow. It is simple and healthy.

If I live in Paris I may be doomed to things I don't desire.

I am afraid of big towns. Here I get up at 7.30. I am happy all day.

I go to bed at 10. I am frightened of Paris. I want to live here.

I have seen the *terrain*. It is the best here, and the only one left. I must build a house. If I could build a

chile^t for 12,000 francs—£500—and live in a home of my own,

happy I would be. I must raise the money somehow.

It would give me a home, quiet, retired, healthy, and near England.

If I live in Egypt I know what my life would be.

If I live in the south of Italy I know I should be idle and worse.

I want to live here. Do think over this and send me the architect.¹ M. Bonnet is excellent and is ready to carry out

any idea. I want a little chalet of wood and plaster walls,

the wooden beams showing and the white square of plaster

the framework—like, I regret to say, Shakespeare's

like old English sixteenth-century farmers' houses.

So your architect has me waiting for him, as he is waiting for me.

Do you think the idea absurd?

I got the *Chronicle*, many thanks. I see the writer on Prince

—A.2.H.²—does not mention my name—foolish of her—it is a

woman. I, as you, the poem of my days, are away, am forced to write.

I have begun something that I think will be very good.

I breakfast to-morrow with the Stannards: what a great

passionate, splendid writer John Strange Winter³ is!

How little people understand her work! *Bootless Baby* is an

symboliste—it is really only the style and the subject that are

wrong. Pray never speak lightly of *Bootless Baby*—indeed

pray never speak of it at all—I never do.

Yours,

Oscar.

Please send a *Chronicle* to my wife:

MRS. C. M. HOLLAND,

Maison Benguerel,

Bevaix,

Pres de Neuchatel,

just marking it—and if my second letter appears,

mark that.

¹ An architect who sent Wilde books on his release from prison.

² A soldier serving a sentence at Reading gaol under court-martial.

Wilde had drawn attention to his case in a letter to the *Daily Chronicle*.

* Pseudonym of Mrs. Arthur Stannard.